

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 INR-07 FBO-02 L-03 CPR-01

/044 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7858

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 0276

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR BF US

SUBJ: PIPELINE INSTALLATION ACROSS USG-LEASED LAND, GEORGETOWN,
EXUMA ISLAND, BAHAMAS

REF: NASSAU 0266

1. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AN AFFIRMATIVE EARLY RESPONSE TO GCOB
REQUEST REFTEL TO INSTALL A PIPE LINE ACROSS USG LEASED LAND
AT GEORGETOWN, EXUMA ISLAND FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

(1) LAND IN QUESTION IS NOT NOW USED BY US MILITARY. THERE
IS NO FORESEEABLE USE OF LAND AND IT IS IN FACT A PORTION
OF THAT LAND WHICH WOULD REVERT TO GCOB IN THE CONTEXT OF
A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE FACILITIES NEGOTIATIONS NOW
IN COURSE.

(2) PIPELINE FULFILLS LEGITIMATE NEED BY ISLANDERS AND ITS
CONSTRUCTION AT THIS TIME IS MOST PROBABLY INSPIRED BY POL-
ITICAL NEED FOR INCUMBENT GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND TO DEMANDS
OF OUT ISLAND CONSTITUENTS IN PREPARATION FOR UPCOMING ELEC-
TIONS. THE EMBASSY HAS IN THE PAST CONSISTENTLY ATTEMPTED
TO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO SIMILAR REQUESTS AND NOT TO DO SO NOW
WOULD NOT ONLY BE INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO GCOB, BUT BY ITS AR-
BITRARY NATURE COULD UNNECESSARILY PROVOKE ILL FEELING AND
THUS BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE.

(3) WE FEEL THAT IT IS IMPORTANT AT THIS STAGE IN THE NE-
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GOTIATIONS, WHEN WE ARE STILL AWAITING INITIAL GCOB RESPONSE

TO OUR COUNTER OFFER, NOT TO GIVE ANY SIGNALS WHICH COULD BE INTENTIONALLY OR UNINTENTIONALLY MISCONSTRUED BY GCOB. WE THUS REJECTED ALTERNATIVE OF A NEGATIVE RESPONSE OR ONE DELAYING OR OTHERWISE LINKING OUR ANSWER TO CONCLUSION OF NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES. TO CONTRARY, AGREEMENT TO REQUEST SHOULD CONVEY USG ASSUMPTION THAT WE ARE AND WILL CONTINUE ON A "BUSINESS AS USUAL BASIS." IN SUM, WE FEEL THAT THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO DEPART FROM THE NORM AND ROCK THE BOAT.

2. EMBASSY THEREFORE REQUESTS DEPARTMENT'S PROMPT AUTHORIZATION TO RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY TO GCOB NOTE.
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